OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

UNION,

ORANGE ASSOCIATIONS,

AND OTHER

SUBJECTS OF DOMESTIC POLICY:

WITH

REFLECTIONS ON THE LATE EVENTS ON THE CONTINENT.

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OBSERVATIONS,

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I DO not undertake to write a formal treatiſe upon the Union, much leſs to exhauſt ſo extenſive and important a ſubject; my ſole intention is to ſubmit to the public judgment ſome few reflections which have occurred to me. I ſigned the reſolutions for an Union in the county in which I reſide, and I wiſh to explain the motives which led me to that ſtep.

I write in concert with no man; I do not know that the point of view in which I ſee the ſubject is that of any other perſon. Theſe arguments will, perhaps, pleaſe no party in this divided country; I am content if they do no miſchief: but as a mode of argument of a new ſpecies has been introduced, unknown to Ariſtotle or the moſt ſubtle of the ſchoolmen, that of bawling out Rebel whenever a man is perplexed for an anſwer; I ſhall take notice, before I conclude, of this extraordinary weapon of political warfare. In the mean time, the reader will permit me to reſt ſatisfied with the conſciouſneſs of my innocence. There are a number of topics which

I ſhall wholly omit, that deſerve to be attentively conſidered before a perſon comes to a deciſion upon the ſubject of an Union. It ought to be examined how ſuch a meaſure may affect our commerce—how the comforts of life may ſuffer by the increaſe of taxes—how money may be withdrawn from the country by the abſence of conſiderable proprietors —in what degree our growing manufactures may loſe or gain by this change in our condition;—and it will be proper to compare the poſſible detriment which may be apprehended under any of theſe heads, with the benefit which I conceive will accrue. I repeat it, I have no other view in what I write but to exhibit the ſubject to the Iriſh public under an aſpect which may poſſibly have eſcaped them. I have no intereſt but in common with every Iriſhman—the proſperity of my country.

If, upon a mature conſideration of the ſubject, viewing it in all its lights, you ſhall think an Union with Great Britain detrimental, in God's name oppoſe it; but do not bring a raſh intemperate diſpoſition of mind to the diſcuſſion; do not ſuffer the beſt of paſſions, a zeal for your country, to be made the inſtrument of private ambition or private ſpleen; do not confirm the charge which has been frequently made againſt you, that you are equally light and precipitate in approving and condemning. Be not miſled by the mock enthuſiaſm of men who were yeſterday the moſt ſervile of courtiers, and would to-day paſs for the warmeſt and moſt diſintereſted of patriots.

patriots. It has often been obſerved, that nations are frequently the dupes of a word, of a faſhion, of ſome prevailing humour and caprice, which dexterous politicians have been lucky enough ſeaſonably to hit, and uſe for their purpoſe. Thus in a neighbouring country, we have ſeen the name of Republic and Liberty kindle enthuſiaſm among the ſlaves of the moſt flagitious deſpotiſm that ever ſcourged mankind; and ſoldiers torn from their homes by the iron hand of oppreſſion, ruſh into the field in defence of thoſe very men who ſent them to be butchered, whilſt they ground their families to the duſt.

Have Iriſhmen any ſhare in that government which they are ſo anxious to ſupport? Are they not ſeduced by the ſpecious phraſes of national independence and imperial greatneſs, to maintain the domination of a few, who have for a century ſcourged them with all the bitterneſs of enmity and prejudice? I would obſerve the greateſt decorum in my expreſſions. I would not imitate the conduct of the opponents of the Union, who have adopted the language of inſult to the Miniſter whom they have for years been in the habits of ſupporting, and railed at the Engliſh nation, in expreſſions little ſhort of the acrimony of ſedition, while they confeſſed that upon our connexion with it our proſperity eſſentially depended. I would fly from the perſecuting ſpirit of our preſent rulers to the government of an enlightened and unprejudiced people; but I do not forget that they are my rulers ſtill. I hope, therefore, I

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ſhall obſerve due caution and circumſpection in my language, if, while they exhort us to cling to their government, as to the model of human legiſlation, with all the zeal of patriotiſm, I venture to expreſs a doubt whether it has been as exemplary as they would repreſent it.

It is an obſervation which muſt ſtrike every perſon who has travelled on the continent of Europe, that the condition of the lower orders of our people is much inferior to that of the ſubjects of the worſt forms of government. We are ſaid to enjoy the bleſſings of the Britiſh conſtitution. Experience, confirming the concluſions of theory, has ſhown the Britiſh conſtitution to be the nobleſt model of legiſlation that ever was deviſed by man. When we contemplate Great Britain, we contemplate a noble ſpectacle; we ſee a ſmall iſland, with a population comparatively inconſiderable, by the mere force of its polity and laws, riſing to a degree of wealth and power which places it at the head of the European nations. Whether we look at the face of the country, or conſider the character of its people, we ſee effects anſwerable to the boaſted excellency of its government; plenty flouriſhing in its fields, neatneſs and a kind of rural elegance ſmiling in its cottages, its ports crowded with ſhips, and its ſtreets reſounding with the buſy hum of contented induſtry; juſtice preſides in its councils, valour animates the exertions of its ſeamen and ſoldiers, probity is the characteriſtic of its merchants, ſturdy independence glows

glows on the brow of its peaſantry. Revolve the annals of hiſtory, caſt your eyes on the moſt celebrated republics of antiquity, you ſee nothing like Great Britain; their wild and irregular liberty could not maintain itſelf without many of the maxims and inſtitutions of deſpotiſm; an outrageous and frequently corrupted populace was the ſovereign; their inſolent clamours often hurried the moſt upright and deſerving citizens to exile and to death; they baniſhed Cicero, and they reared the ambitious deſigns of Cæſar. No man could ſay with confidence, "I ſhall enjoy in my old age the acquiſitions of "my youth; at my death I ſhall leave to my chil-"dren what a life of honeſt and perſevering in-"duſtry has obtained." What can equal the ſtrict and impartial juſtice of the Britiſh tribunals, where the meaneſt individual has his claims fairly tried, and the meaneſt offender is protected by all the punctilious nicety of forms, and all the ſubtilties of legal interpretation? I have obſerved the face of the country in England, and the character of its people.

What a painful contraſt does Ireland exhibit! I might here dip my pencil in the blackeſt colours, and exerciſe my talents in painting the moſt gloomy ſcenes; I might ſpread out a picture of wretchedneſs, ſuch as can be equalled in Europe only by the deſolated plains of La Vendée*. But I ſhould diſplay an idle parade of eloquence,

* One of the commiſſioners of French deſpotiſm, writing to his wicked maſters, deſcribes with a terrible energy this once flouriſhing province; "It is," he ſays, "a heap of aſhes moiſt-"ened

eloquence, which might inflame the paſſions inſtead of inſtructing the underſtanding, and there is not one

"ened with blood." Good God! is this the picture of a country under the influence of liberty? Is it to ſee this unhappy iſland reduced to the ſituation of La Vendée, that we are to encounter all the dangers, that we are to endure all the calamities of a revolution? It is true, the admirers of the late events in France cannot think of liberty without thinking of blood and ſlaughter. There was a ſeditious ſong read in the courſe of the ſtate trials, in London, written in this taſte: I do not exactly remember the words, but I know the tree of liberty was to be watered with blood; as blood is its water, murder is the fruit of this fatal tree. When Citizen David exerciſes his pencil upon an allegorical repreſentation of Liberty, according to the French notion of it, he will, no doubt, chooſe for his model one of the drunken Poiſſardes, whom he has often ſeen with frantic looks and diſhevelled hair, with a reeking dagger in one hand, and a bottle of brandy in the other, beſtriding the pale and mangled carcaſe which her deſperate fury had levelled with the duſt. I confeſs I cannot accommodate myſelf to this image of liberty.—I have been hitherto accuſtomed to aſſociate with that cheriſhed name, the ideas of beauty, health, and joy, of whatever is lovely and delightful in the creation. The Genius of civil diſcord is repreſented in Virgil, bound with a hundred fetters, and muttering threats of impious vengeance with his blood ſtained lips; but if this ſweeteſt and moſt elegant of poets had employed his beautiful genius in ſinging the goddeſs that once bleſſed his country, he would have done it, methinks, in other notes; we ſhould have ſeen her, in his lays, arrayed in ſmiles and attended by the Graces; flowers would have ſprung up under her feet; at her appearance the heavens would have aſſumed a brighter flush; the verdure of the fields a freſher tint: he would have ſtudied to improve upon the picture of fertility and gladneſs, which his predeceſſor Lucretius exhibited in celebrating the goddeſs of love and beauty.

Te Dea, te fugiunt venti, te nubila cœli,
Adventumque tuum tibi ſuaveis Dædala tellus
Submittit flores, tibi rident æquora ponti,
Placatumque nitet diffuſo lumina cœlum.

Take my tranſlation for want of a better.

Thee, Goddeſs, thee, the winds tempeſtuous fly;
At thy approach the clouds forſake the ſky;
Earth, curious artiſt, pours forth at thy feet
Each fruit nectareous, and each balmy ſweet;
Old Ocean ſmiles, while thin diffuſive light
Wraps the ſooth'd heavens and ſoftens on the ſight.

of my readers who has taken a ride a few miles from the capital who could not add freſh ſtrokes to my picture, however I might load the features and heighten the colouring.

It is natural to inquire how this happens, whence this extraordinary contraſt in two iſlands ſeparated only by a few miles of ſea. Does a peſtilential air breathe in our atmoſphere, which blaſts vegetation and mars the exertions of human induſtry ?—More ſalubrious ſuns do not ſhine upon the human race than what Providence has beſtowed upon Ireland. Perhaps, the ſoil is curſed by an invincible and untractable barrenneſs :—Its fertility contends with the indolence of the labourer, and its yellow harveſts wave their heads around the falling manſion of the half-ſtarved peaſant. Perhaps it is ſurrounded by what Salluſt calls *mare importuoſum*, and agriculture declines, having no means of being fed by foreign commerce :—Its ports open on every ſide their deep and capacious boſoms, and Providence ſeems to have deſigned it to be the centre of the commerce of a world. What then is the ſecret ſpring which has raiſed Great Britain to unrivalled greatneſs ?—and why with every advantage of nature does Ireland languiſh at the ſide of her proud and imperial ſiſter ?

This is a nice queſtion ; I touch it with a trembling hand. It requires the keeneſt eye to ſee the cauſes of national elevation and depreſſion. We ought to be particularly diſtruſtful of our ſpeculations

in this age of ready and ignorant ſpeculation, when every coffee-houſe politician thinks he has diſcovered what eſcaped a Monteſquieu or a Burke; but I think we may offer a reaſonable gueſs, if we attentively conſider the Parliaments of England and Ireland. I ſpeak of the Houſe of Commons, which is the moſt important part of the Legiſlature, and gives the impulſe to the whole.

The Engliſh Houſe of Commons is not faſhioned according to any ſyſtem or theory; but in point of fact it unites in its boſom the repreſentatives of all the claſſes of men in the community: it therefore ſympathizes with the feelings, and ſpeaks the opinions of a miſcellaneous people. Is a commercial queſtion agitated? it reckons in its numbers the moſt opulent and reſpectable merchants of the country; ſo the greateſt landed proprietors deliberate upon every point intereſting to its agriculture. In my opinion, the Engliſh Houſe of Commons is the faireſt repreſentative of the public opinion that can be contrived. Divide the whole iſland into diſtricts, you throw all the returns into mob-elections; you exclude all ſober, quiet men, all ſtudious, recluſe characters, all men of large property, indolent and faſtidious from their property, who could not endure the vexations of a popular conteſt; and if they prevailed upon themſelves to enter the liſts, would be conſtantly overcome by noiſy, ſpecious demagogues, with fluent tongues and empty heads; property would want its due weight;

commerce

commerce and agriculture in their moſt important branches would not be repreſented; no part of the nation would be repreſented but the tribe of enterpriſing wits and idle talkers, the deſtruction of every country that is governed by their councils: I am convinced this is one of the great immediate cauſes of the misfortunes of France. I conclude from all theſe obſervations the great cauſe of the proſperity of England is the intimate connexion that ſubſiſts between the meaſures of the Houſe of Commons and the feelings and opinions of every claſs of the people, inſomuch that the proceedings of the one have not for any length of time varied from the confirmed ſentiments of the other. Every order of ſubjects has in the boſom of the Legiſlature its moſt conſiderable members who eſpouſe its cauſe, ſympathize in its feelings, and ſpeak its opinions. This is what I call a true repreſentation of the people, and not any of thoſe fanciful ſchemes which, through the medium of a pretended popular election, would throw the whole power into the hands of one ſet of men, perhaps the moſt ſhining, certainly the leaſt uſeful of the various claſſes into which a great community is divided.

Does this kind of repreſentation exiſt in Ireland? Do our repreſentatives, as they are called, ſympathize with the feelings and opinions of the great body of the nation? Can the national pulſe be felt through its acts?

For a century paſt the great body of the nation has been an object of jealouſy, ſuſpicion, hatred mixed with contempt, to its rulers; on one ſide are numbers, on the other are property and dominion. —Property and dominion muſt neceſſarily regard numbers with a jealous eye; hence all the angry paſſions, all the bitter rancorous prejudices which ariſe from fear. Theſe cauſes of ſeparation and hoſtility between property and numbers are further heightened by difference in religious opinions; add to this, the belief of concealed claims which animates the hopes of the one party, and aggravates the fears of the other. A long courſe of ſevere perſecuting meaſures has reduced the bulk of the people to the loweſt degree of ignorance and wretchedneſs; this has given to hatred the poignancy of contempt. From ignorance and wretchedneſs has ariſen a plundering rapacious ſpirit, which has produced freſh animoſity, manifeſting itſelf in new pains and penalties, which, whilſt they ſeem to apply correctives to the effects, inflame the cauſe of theſe diſorders.

Perhaps Ireland is the only country in the world where ſuch a complete ſeparation ſubſiſts between the governors and the governed. In England the public opinion is the law, and acts of authority are little more than emanations of what the moſt ſober and reſpectable part of the community have already approved in their thoughts. In Ireland there is no public opinion, or if there is a faint reſemblance of one, it is the opinion of thoſe who are moſt eager

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to puſh violent meaſures againſt the bulk of the nation. A man riſes in eſtimation among the ruling party, and acquires honours by expreſſing hatred and contempt of the majority of his countrymen. There is the form of the Britiſh conſtitution, but there is not what makes the Britiſh conſtitution the moſt beautiful contrivance of government that ever bleſſed mankind; there is a Houſe of Commons, but is it a Houſe of Commons ariſing from the boſom of the community; compoſed miſcellaneouſly of every claſs of the people, blended in feeling and opinion with the people, and therefore ſpeaking the public voice? The body of the ſociety ſeems ſcarcely to belong to the ſociety, but as the Helots of Sparta belonged to their maſters; they are cutters of turf and drawers of water, ſcarce members of the community. So far from there being connexion of feeling and ſentiment between them and the aſſembly enacting laws, there is a perpetuaal conteſt of malevolence between them; the ſubject is intent upon doing as much miſchief as he can by fraud and plunder; the governor meditates only upon plans of vengeance and conſtraint. We ſee the conſequences; a fertile country preſents on every ſide the picture of ſqualid wretchedneſs, and the ſubjects of the nobleſt form of government in the world, enjoy fewer comforts than thoſe of the worſt. This has hitherto been admitted as an indiſputable fact; indeed, a man need only take a ſhort ride in the country to be convinced of this melancholy truth. It is only lately and for a certain purpoſe

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that certain eyes have been able to discover the venerable image of public prosperity reposing in the deserted shop of the ruined manufacturer, in the smoky hut of the half-starved peasant. One would think, from certain speeches, that a fairy had waved her wand over this land, and had wrought a change, such as we read in the Arabian Nights Entertainments, had coverted a desolate moor into a magnificent garden. Instead of being proverbial for poverty and wretchedness, we have suddenly started up a rich and prosperous people; they who some months ago would have cut our throats, are now our dearest benefactors; and the VENERABLE CHIEF who interposed his laurels between us and *their* fury, oppresses us by his clemency and persecutes us by his mercy. They who can believe this miraculous revolution, let them: I am of the opinion of Pope Lambertini—*i miracoli già son passati fra noi.* Supposing that no supernatural power has intervened, and that the country is as it was some months ago, I shall consider the remedies that have been proposed for the evils which till this time were thought to exist.

Some young gentlemen who have become great statesmen, as some officers in the guards in Swift's time, discovered that there was no God by the mere force of their natural talents, without any assistance of human learning, have proposed to us independence under the mild and beneficent protection of the French republic; and there are not wanting honest

neſt Iriſhmen, who ſecretly worſhip this notion in the concealed ſanctuary of their hearts. It may be thought time miſpent to beſtow any attention on a ſentiment which it is a crime to entertain; but no labour is thrown away which is employed in removing well-meaning error, and correcting the deluſion of virtuous hearts. I hope to prove, that independence would be the moſt fatal preſent which Providence could make us in its anger.

I will ſuppoſe, that by a miracle as extraordinary as I have before mentioned, the wiſh of our malcontents was accompliſhed; that Ireland, inſtead of being ſeparated by a narrow ſea from Great Britain, was placed in the middle of the Atlantic, and erected into an independent power. In the firſt place, ſhe would have them to provide for her own defence; the fleets of the ſiſter kingdom would not then guard our coaſts, nor her armies be ready to repel invaſion. The great ſtateſmen with whom I venture to argue, as they are not yet in poſſeſſion of ſupreme power, like their worthy brethren in France *, have perhaps forgotten, in the tranſcendant magnificence of their conceptions, that there are ſtates in the world poſſeſſed of conſiderable naval and military ſtrength, that the golden age is

* If, unfortunately, this was the caſe, if we were governed by an Iriſh Directory, inſtead of our preſent excellent Viceroy, I ſhould not venture to conteſt any point with theſe gentlemen: I too well remember the obſervation of a Roman philoſopher, who would not be victorious in argument againſt the maſter of twenty legions.

not returned, nor ambition and avarice eradicated from the minds of men. Suppoſe that virtuous patriot Barras, or that profound metaphyſician Syeyes, ſhould take a fancy to Ireland, as, in kindneſs to the Grand Signior, they propoſed to reform, or, as they expreſs it, to regenerate Egypt, where would theſe ſublime ſtateſmen find fleets to oppoſe the landing of their bare-breeched Myrmidons? Where could they find armies to fight them after they were landed? Where would they find generals to command ſuch armies if found, or are they prepared for the *mild, paternal* government of a French commiſſioner? They certainly might hope to find favour in his eyes; they would have the merit of rebellion againſt their lawful ſovereign; they had deſtroyed property and induſtry; they had deluged their country in blood, and ſubjected it to a foreign force; but a participation in crimes does not always propitiate criminals. In the courſe of the French revolution, as high-flyers as themſelves have been brought down to the ſlider of the guillotine. A life of infamy could not protect the Duke of Orleans; and Robeſpierre was hurried to execution, though he had the blood of thouſands upon his head. But ſuppoſing Ireland ſhould eſcape this great calamity, and not become the ſubjugated province of a foreign power; granting that the French Directors did not condeſcend to reform and enlighten us, what ſhould we do in our independence? Did power and dominion remain in the ſame hands; did no change take place in the ſtate of property, then all

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the evils I have enumerated would continue to oppreſs us, and with double virulence, the controlling and mitigating influence of Great Britain being removed.

But this is not the intention of the projectors of independence; they do not mean to give us a barren unproductive independence — confiſcation and plunder are to follow in its train; an ignorant, rapacious, cruel populace are to be let looſe, and all the property in the country to be ſwallowed in one whirlpool of confiſcation and plunder. I ſuppoſe I need not comment upon this ſtate of things, to prove it would not be beneficial to any order of men: the confiſcators would not long enjoy the fruits of their rapacity; the principle of property being once torn up by the roots, would not ſhoot up again at the pleaſure of the new proprietors. One ſet of robbers would ſucceed another; all productive induſtry would be extinguiſhed in this conteſt of violence; and the temporaty enjoyment of the few comforts of life which would remain, would be procured only by the longeſt and ſharpeſt ſword; the little commercial induſtry and wealth which has ſprung up, notwithſtanding the diſcouragements of the times, would be ſwept away, and deſolated Ireland would add to the melancholy examples which hiſtory exhibits, that injuſtice is never policy, and that the nation which thinks to proſper by crimes, will find they terminate in its deſtruction.

Every Iriſhman who has any regard for his country, indeed every man who does not avow himſelf a robber by ſyſtem, muſt ſhrink from ſuch a proſpect. There is not in the ſtores of divine wrath ſuch a curſe as what is called French protection, and this is the price we muſt pay for independence—we can have it by no other means. We are certainly a miſerable people, but our miſery would be increaſed tenfold by ſuch a change in our condition. The poor peaſant amidſt his wretchedneſs and poverty clings to his religion; it is the prop of his hopes in life;—it is his conſolation in death. What would be his condition if this ſmall cheering ray were withdrawn from the chill gloom of his hut—if he ſaw all the places of worſhip (in which one day in the week he forgot his own wretchedneſs in the ſplendour of the altar) ſhut up by the orders of the French commiſſioner—all the objects of the fond belief of his heart treated with profanation and ſcorn by the fanatics of infidelity *—if, when he could a little underſtand the language of his new maſters, his ears were daily ſtunned by a parcel of hair-dreſſers babbling the jargon of an impious philoſophy?

I have ſaid it—this is not the concern only of one order of men. Every arm ſhould be ready to aſſiſt the magiſtrate againſt thoſe who would plunge

* There is a remarkable paſſage mentioned in the works of D'Alembert. He ſays it is a queſtion deſerving the moſt ſerious attention of philoſophers, whether infidelity might not produce fanaticiſm as well as religion? The French have given a practical ſolution of this moral problem.

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their country into ſuch calamities; every tongue ſhould utter the accents of execration. It is the cauſe of the poor as well as of the rich;—the rich have property to preſerve—the poor have property to acquire. All men are equally intereſted in maintaining the ſecurity of property; property is the ſource from which flow all the ſtreams that fertilize a country *; it is the incentive to all induſtry, the ſharpener of all talent. Man is naturally an indolent animal: were it not for the preſſure of want and the proſpect of enjoying ſomething which he might call his own, he would ſink down in a ſtupid lethargy, and ſleep till death. This proſpect is held out to him by the laws of property; to maintain theſe, ſocieties coaleſced, magiſtrates were appointed: all the inſtitutions of civil life take their riſe from this origin.

Property is preſerved by impartially reſpecting every acquiſition of human induſtry. The blow which is given at the top vibrates to the bottom; and the ſame violence which diſpoſſeſſes the great man of his palace, affects the ſecurity of the meaneſt tenant of the pooreſt hut.

* I muſt ever lament that I was not preſent in the Britiſh Houſe of Commons when our illuſtrious countryman Mr. Burke entered into the diſcuſſion of the advantages reſulting to mankind from the principle of property blended with the ſocial union; a diſcuſſion which he adorned with that rich and philoſophical imagination (an apt and characteriſtical expreſſion, I think of Gibbon, in ſpeaking of this great man) which particularly diſtinguiſhed him.

From a due conſideration of theſe principles, Cicero obſerves, that the loweſt mechanic conſidered his little ſhop and the rude inſtruments of his ſimple labour as aimed at by the conſpiracy of Catiline; beſides, an example of violence even in the higheſt part of the ſtate cuts off all the hopes of the poor man, and repreſſes all his induſtry; he is, therefore, in the deepeſt manner intereſted in the public tranquillity. He will not endeavour to extricate himſelf from his poverty by ſober perſevering exertion, unleſs he can look forward to ſecure enjoyment as the end of his labours; and this proſpect is entirely intercepted from his view when he ſees the higher places in the ſociety to which his induſtry aſpired, ſeized upon by lawleſs force and daring rapine. It follows from all theſe obſervations, that war to the palace, and peace to the cottage, is no leſs the ſhout of folly than the cry of knavery; they both ſtand upon the ſame foundation, one cannot fall without the other's tottering. The violence which immediately preys upon the rich, affects the poor in their ſecurity, in their proſpects, in all the motives which call forth their talents and ſtimulate their induſtry.

I have often reflected upon an obſervation of Dr. Johnſon, as it appeared to me to ſuggeſt the true diſtinction between the partiſans of the French revolution. The converſation happened to turn upon the controverſy which was ſtarted by ſome eloquent wits and fooliſh retailers of paradoxes, whether the rudeneſs of the ſavage ſtate was not preferable to the

elegance of poliſhed life :—" Rouſſeau," ſaid he, " writes too well, and is too clever a fellow, to " believe what he ſays; but I am afraid that poor " Monboddo believes it."

It cannot be doubted, there are ſome retailers of French principles, who, like poor Monboddo, believe what they ſay, who repeat the names of Liberty and Republic, without guile, in pure ſimplicity of heart; who firmly believe that ſober commercial induſtry would proſper under the auſpices of Barras, and depend upon the piety of l'Abbé Sieyes to promote their particular form of Chriſtianity. Whilſt we ſhudder at the conſequences of this deluſion, we cannot regard theſe wretched fanatics without ſome mixture of pity. The moſt abſurd zealots * of the moſt abſurd religion never brought to the moſt extravagant tenets of their religion ſuch an orthodox abſence of reaſon and diſcernment as diſtinguiſh theſe men who call themſelves philoſophers. They who believe that dying with a cow's tail in one's hand is a ſure mean of ſalvation,

* Yet ſuch is human frailty, that theſe bigots, like other devotees, have ſometimes deviated into hereſy. They are orthodox in the principle, though heretical in the particular inſtance. The ſame hoſtility to human reaſon marks their occaſional diſbelief as diſtinguiſhes their general credulity. For ſome years paſt, the reader cannot forget there has been a regular declaration promulgated every year by the rulers of unfortunate France, that their immediate predeceſſors were a parcel of ſcoundrels, and their government a villanous tyranny; but our fanatics, who believe them in every thing elſe, will not believe them in one they might be ſuppoſed to know beſt—their own ſlaviſh condition, and the profligacy of their aſſociates.

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are bold and ſagacious ſceptics compared to them. What doctrine is not a man prepared to ſwallow who places any confidence in any of thoſe dull pamphlets which are annually publiſhed in France under the title of Conſtitutions * ?

There is another deſcription of men for whoſe underſtanding I have a due reſpect ; I cannot charge them with any ſimplicity of heart or eaſineſs of belief. They are not the dupes of the jargon which they preach ; the names of Liberty and Independence they think convenient for their purpoſes, but their views are fixed upon quite different objects. I ſpeak of thoſe bold enterpriſing ſpirits who cannot bear the languor and liſtleſſneſs of a quiet life ; they are not at all ſatisfied with the portion of wealth and

* I heard a gentleman ſay he was ſome time ago at a table d'hote in Paris. The company talked with much warmth a great deal of (Gallicè) galimathias (Anglicè nonſenſe) upon Liberty, Equality, the Rights of Man, &c. In the courſe of the converſation a little ill-looking fellow who was particularly vociferous, a ci-devant Abbé, to give the weight of authority to his ſentiments, and command a reſpectful deference, not indeed from his auditory (for nobody liſtened, they were all talking), but from his company, obſerved—*J'ai travaillé moi à quatorze conſtitutions.*

I ſuppoſe there is not a pert little ſcribbler in Paris who has not had a hand in ſome *Conſtitution*, though l'Abbé Sieyes is grand *Conſtitution-maker* to the Republic, one and indiviſible.

The title of *King-maker* ſounded big in the ears of our anceſtors ; it was given to one of our ancient Barons, I think it was the Earl of Warwick, in the conteſts of the White and Red Roſes. What would they have thought of a man who every now and then favoured the world with an entire new conſtitution ? The memory is perplexed with the conſtitutions of different years, which are the watchwords of parties in France : *La Conſtitution de l'an* 1789—*la Conſtitution de l'an* 1793. I forget from what particular year the preſent Conſtitution takes its denomination.

power

power which has fallen to their ſhare in the diſtribution of the goods of ſociety; they do not like the ſlow gradual returns of regular induſtry; violence and rapine they look upon as a ſhort cut to the enjoyments which they long after; they therefore wiſh to overturn the ſtate, regarding a ſcene of general confuſion and plunder as a proper field for the exertion of their talents; they are men who deſire to reap without the trouble of ſowing, and conſider the acquiſitions of the ſober and plodding part of the ſpecies as a booty intended to reward their ſuperior genius and audacity. With theſe men it would be abſurd to reaſon. The broadeſt concluſion you can draw from your arguments is only a freſh incentive to them to perſevere in their ſchemes. Theorems and corollaries they will grant you all, and be of the ſame mind ſtill; to enter into a controverſy with them is juſt as idle as if you were to go and ſeriouſly harangue a band of robbers to deſiſt from their enterpriſes, as they muſt terminate in the diſtreſs of the innocent traveller. Such perſons muſt exiſt in every ſociety, and that ſociety is the happieſt, which, by the education it promotes and the encouragement it holds out to ſober induſtry, admits them in the ſmalleſt number. From various cauſes they abounded more in France than in any other country; there they are triumphant, though whole ſets have periſhed ſucceſſively, the victims of each other's ambition; in the ſame manner as among the nations that overturned the Roman empire, the tribe that went before was conſtantly thruſt out by the more barbarous

tribe

tribe that remained behind; and the moment one race of conquerors began to ſettle into civilization and aſſume the form of a regular community, another band of ſavages appeared from their native North, who, in the full vigour of their unmitigated hardihood, ſeized what in their turn they yielded to invaders more ferocious than themſelves.

Whilſt none enter this confederacy againſt the civil order of mankind but perſons of ſuitable characters and talents, we cannot more reaſonably complain than we can of earthquakes and whirlwinds; but it is certainly trying to our patience to ſee dunces aſpire to the ſublime and commanding crimes of Borgias and Catilines, and the meaneſt and moſt ignorant of the community leave the care of their bullocks and the ſuperintendency of their counters, to engage in plots and conſpiracies. True, Catiline conſpired to overturn the Roman ſtate, and ventured to attack when a Cicero defended; but who was Catiline? Tully exhauſts the ſubtleties of his ſtyle to deſcribe the various qualifications which compoſed that extraordinary man. I ſhall not mention that he was of a patrician family, one of the firſt in Rome; that he poſſeſſed a ſplendid patrimony, till he had diſſipated it by his prodigality. Periſhable diſtinctions! to make uſe of the words of a great orator, compared with the immortality of his genius and his crimes. He was gay with the gay, ſevere with the ſevere, and could accommodate his manners and converſation to the various deſcriptions of mankind.

Senates

Senates liſtened while he ſpoke; legions recoiled from the vigour of his arm; his wit and hilarity were the delight of every ſocial circle; he was the hero of the battle and the orator of the forum; he had a mind capable of every deſign, and a body capable of every hardſhip; neither watching, nor fatigue, nor hunger, nor the inclemencies of ſeaſons, could break the vigour of his conſtitution; he could carry on at the ſame time a private intrigue and a public conſpiracy; and while he meditated the deſtruction of the ſtate that repreſſed his ambition, he was intent upon the ruin of the woman that inflamed his deſires. As far as the word *right* is applicable to wickedneſs, ſuch a man had a right to be ambitious. Enterpriſes of gigantic atrocity and daring, from which common natures ſhrink appalled, were ſuited to a mind like his. He was one of thoſe deſtructive ſpirits whom Providence ſometimes ſends abroad to try human virtue and confound human wiſdom. He meditated the deſtruction of the Roman commonwealth; but he had a Cicero to contend with, and he failed. Cæſar afterwards ſucceeded. The name of Cæſar comprehends whatever human valour has of heroic, human ſagacity of penetrating, and human wit of elegant and refined. Such names communicate a ſplendour to the hiſtory of thoſe times. We admire whilſt we execrate: we are ſhocked at the atrocity of the purpoſe, but we are ſtruck by the boldneſs of the conception, and the talents that appear in the execution. Far different are the crimes of the preſent day; they anſwer one great moral

end—wickedneſs appears in all its native deformity. It it an obſervation of Johnſon upon the character of Lothario, that ſuch repreſentations tend to corrupt the heart: we forget the vice in the accompliſhments which accompany it: the eye of the mind is dazzled; it does not diſcern the libertine, the deſtroyer of virtue and domeſtic happineſs, where the gentleman, the wit, and the hero, are ſo conſpicuous. The ſame objection has been made to Lovelace in Clariſſa, and may be extended to other popular novels.

In this point of view, ſome good may ariſe to mankind from the calamitous events which are paſſing before our eyes. Curious ſpeculators may ſearch the hiſtory of our times to diſcover the true form of vice diveſted of that falſe glare which great talents and elegant accompliſhments are ſo apt to throw over it. They will there ſee political adventurers without courage, conſpirators without ſagacity: they will there ſee men without fortune, without extent of views or firmneſs of reſolution, aſpiring to govern their country, and the meaneſt of the human race aſſociated againſt the moſt beautiful inſtitutions.

It pains me to think what ignoble enemies the ſon of Chatham has to encounter!—what a ſet of conſpirators have undertaken to deſtroy the accumulated wiſdom of ages—that ſcheme of ſocial liberty for which a Somers thought and a William battled.

It

It was originally the obſervation of Cowley, which he miſapplied to Cromwell, and which Burke borrowed in ſpeaking of Haſtings, " that when it pleaſed " Providence to afflict the people of Egypt, it did " not ſend forth the lion or the tiger, or any of the " wild beaſts of the deſert, but it ſent lice and mice " —it ſent the meaneſt reptiles."

I have done with the politicians who propoſe to us ſlavery to the worſt of tyrants as the price of our redemption: I turn to men who offer us milder remedies. I ſhall take one view of theſe remedies, as the ſame obſervations are applicable to them all. We have often heard of what is called (though very improperly) Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform, as what is to cure every evil, and produce general happineſs.

By Catholic Emancipation is meant the admiſſion of Roman Catholics into the Legiſlature; that is, giving them political power. By Parliamentary Reform I do not know exactly what is meant, as reformers have differed in their ſchemes upon this ſubject. I will take it to mean the deſtruction of boroughs, a point in which all theſe gentlemen are agreed. What is the ſtate of the country? From a variety of cauſes operating for a century paſt, the body of property is centred in a few hands. The bulk of the nation is excluded from power and from influence over power, not merely by legiſlative proviſion, but by the circumſtances of the ſociety,

joined to that great maxim of the British Constitution, and indeed of all well-regulated government, that where property is, there shall be the great weight in public affairs. Suppose Roman Catholics were to-morrow emancipated, or, to make use of a more proper phrase, admitted to a share of political power, what would be their influence in the Legislature? How few would take their seats in either of the assemblies which compose it! Would they be able to correct the prevailing spirit of the government? Would, through their medium, the opinions and feelings of the people find a way into the proceedings of the Legislature? A century would elapse before such a measure would be known in any public effect. It would appear only to the readers of newspapers, and the persons present when the members took their oaths.

The same may be said to those ingenious gentlemen who propose to reform our House of Commons. It is not the House of Commons alone that wants to be reformed, but the whole country. The point to be accomplished is, to destroy the sullen line of separation that divides the governors from the governed, to blend the different classes of the community into one mass, to incorporate the feelings and opinions of the nation with the acts of the government, to make the House of Commons truly and substantially what they now are in name—the representatives of the people. This can be done only by disseminating wealth over the face of the country; without

without that, Parliamentary Reform is only a dull farce, and would be attended with more evil than good. Let the projectors of reform raiſe up in the great body of the nation an independent gentry, an opulent commercial intereſt, a large ruling property that ſhall ſecure to the nation due influence in all elections; and then we may ſpeak to them. Their ſcheme is plauſible, and deſerves our moſt ſerious attention, if we only ſuppoſe half a dozen miracles to be wrought. I acknowledge the caſe warrants ſupernatural interpoſition; according to the rule of the poet, it is certainly *dignus vindice nodus*; but it is eaſier to introduce a divinity into an epic poem, or let down a machine in an opera, than to change at once the eſtabliſhed order of things. I appeal to thoſe who know the ſtate of elections in Ireland, whether any good would ariſe to the great body of the nation from embracing the plan of the moſt ſenſible reformers, by deſtroying the boroughs, and giving all the returns to the counties and great commercial cities? Does the great body of the nation preponderate either in the counties or the great commercial cities? Would the ruling party loſe any part of their aſcendant? Is not almoſt all the property of the country theirs? and would not almoſt all the returns be theirs alſo? We ſhould ſtill be governed by party feelings and party prejudices; and we ſhould only have the dangers, without the benefit of a change. If this is in a great meaſure the cauſe of the wretchedneſs of Ireland,—if the government of party feelings and party prejudices is at all times a

ſore government, it is particularly ſo at this time. Recent and ever to be deplored events in this country have given to party feelings and party prejudices an extraordinary degree of acrimony.

It does not belong to my ſubject to expatiate on the cauſes of the late rebellion: it is ſufficient to obſerve, that it was produced by the men whoſe principles and views I have at ſome length commented upon. The interpoſition of a foreign power was to give it ſucceſs. This would be ſufficient to arm all ſober, reflecting well-wiſhers to their country againſt it. They know full well—all hiſtory atteſts it—that when a power interpoſes to aſſiſt any nation in a domeſtic quarrel, the nation prevailing by its aſſiſtance muſt in fact remain ſubject to it. When we conſider the character of the foreign power that would probably poſſeſs a ruling and controlling influence over us, if we ſhould not be its ſlaves, there is no ſtate of bondage that ever the world beheld before theſe times, or that prevails in any other part of the world at preſent, which we muſt not prefer to victory by its co-operation. The rebellion, independently of this foreign connexion, was of the moſt immoral kind. At the head of it were a parcel of young men, who miſtook the talent of writing a futile pamphlet, or making a florid harangue, for the talent of governing a ſtate; and thought that nothing more was wanting to regulate the affairs of a great ſociety but the fooliſh ambition of attempting it. Their bungling plots terminated in nothing but the miſerable death of ſome of their deluded followers. Their

deſign,

deſign, as far as they had any deſign, was of the moſt flagitious nature; it was not a crime alone againſt the laws of a particular ſtate, but againſt the laws of morality and the general intereſts of mankind; it aimed at the utter ſubverſion of property; an ignorant and rapacious populace were to be bribed by the ſpoils of the rich, and robbery was to ſuppy the means of warfare to rebellion. After what I have ſaid, nobody, I believe, will ſuſpect me to be partial to the cauſe of our late inſurgents. Intereſt is here at no variance with principle, and both confirmed by my habits of thought and conduct, muſt make me regard them with execration. I hope, therefore, what follows will not be attributed to any deſign of ſpreading diſaffection, but merely to a wiſh of thoroughly inveſtigating a queſtion of the utmoſt importance in the preſent criſis.

The fury of the rapacious inſurgents was principally levelled againſt the ruling party; it was natural it ſhould be ſo. I do not think religion had the greateſt ſhare in determining the hoſtility; it might have ſome upon ignorant bigotted minds. I hope to ſhow, before I conclude, that whatever faults may be charged on the prevailing religion of our people, it is not akin to infidelity, and rather diſpoſes to obedience than encourages reſiſtance to eſtabliſhed authority. The ruling party, as ſuch, were of courſe the objects of every diſcontent which was directed againſt the Government. Theirs was the property, theirs, therefore, the booty to allure plunderers; but, however, it happened, the party that prevails in

both

both Houſes of the Legiſlature were the principal ſufferers by the rebellion; they muſt regard the great body of the people as criminals towards them. Is it an unfair conſequence, that they will carry reſentments, the feelings of injured men, into the government of the country? I do not blame thoſe reſentments—I do not blame thoſe feelings. Men who have ſuffered in their perſons or property may be allowed to feel as men—ſuch is human nature; but can we expect from them a ſober, unprejudiced, diſpaſſionate adminiſtration, ſuch as may heal the wounds of our bleeding country; ſuch as may reconcile the animoſities of a divided people? Did not many ſigns appear in the laſt ſeſſion of Parliament, that the voice of reſentment was more liſtened to than that of juſtice? There were found perſons to juſtify acts of ſubaltern authority, which appeared monſtrous to every diſpaſſionate obſerver; againſt which, law, policy, every warm feeling of the heart, and every ſober judgment of the head, roſe up with one unanimous conſent.

I have liſtened to the converſation of men whoſe humanity could not be doubted in the ordinary intercourſe of life, but who were heated by reſentment. I, who have lived for ſome years paſt in a country of liberty and juſtice, where neither the voice of rebellion nor perſecution ever wounded my ear, who fortunately was not preſent at the ſcenes which had raiſed their feelings to ſuch a pitch, and who, therefore, could not enter into their warmth, was really ſhocked and aſtoniſhed. Gibbets and

executions

executions ſeemed to haunt their imaginations; they looked forward with a ſavage joy to the ſufferings which they would inflict on the rebels when they were taken; their whole legiſlative wiſdom was puniſhment, and every puniſhment was death.

The juſt animoſity againſt the wretched inſurgents has been extended to a prejudice againſt their religion; and the moſt preciſe, ſevere, dogmatical mode of Chriſtianity which the impious fanatics in France have perſecuted with unrelenting rage, as the moſt determined enemy to their uſurpations, whoſe head they violently deſpoiled of all his dominions, and carried into captivity, which ended in his wretched death, which has ever been the ſupport of the throne and the altar, and was once the ſole ruling religion of Europe, is conſidered as the natural ally of infidelity and rebellion.

A ſet of men, whoſe opinion is the only thing that can be called a public opinion in Ireland, have arrayed themſelves in clubs and lodges to maintain this prejudice, to preſerve all religious and civil animoſities pure and unmitigated in the country; and the name of the tolerant and heroic William is made the rallying point of fanaticiſm and perſecution.

I ſhall take notice of both theſe ſubjects before I come to an end of theſe Obſervations; they are intimately connected with the main queſtion propoſed to be diſcuſſed, or, if not, their extreme importance

will plead my apology. I ſhall conſider whether there is any thing in the genius or character of the Catholic religion which is particularly calculated to render it ſubſervient to the views of the French rulers and their followers; I ſhall next examine whether the Orange Aſſociations (as they are called) are at all congenial to the ſpirit of the Britiſh conſtitution, or qualified to promote what muſt be an object dear to every honeſt heart—genuine obedience and loyalty. But it ſeems, before I write upon the ſubject of loyalty, I muſt vindicate my own. I have already obſerved that it is cuſtomary to raiſe a ſhout upon this head, and drown the ſober accents of reaſon in one ſenſeleſs clamour of fanaticiſm. It may ſeem unneceſſary to thoſe who have known me for ſome years paſt, to enter into any vindication of my character in this reſpect: but as unfortunately I live in a country where ſome men judge it neceſſary, in order to ſhow their attachment to a humane Sovereign, to perſecute his ſubjects, and their love for a mild and beneficent government, to imitate the exceſſes of its enemies—I think it incumbent upon me to ſay a few words upon the ſubject.

At the origin of the French revolution, I acknowledge, with ſhame and confuſion, that I was raſh, ought I to ſay impudent enough, to oppoſe my ſhallow judgment to the opinions of that great man, who took ſuch a large and comprehenſive view of human affairs; whoſe whole life was dedicated to the ſupport of genuine liberty, which he beſt knew how

how to diſtinguiſh from deſpotiſm aſſuming that name; who fought in her ſacred cauſe againſt the oppreſſors of their ſpecies, whether inveſted with vice-regal government in India, or poſſeſſing ſupreme power in Europe; who pointed out with prophetic wiſdom the crimes which now deſolate the civilized world in their ſeeds and firſt cauſes; whoſe eloquent indignation will for ever vindicate the majeſty of juſtice againſt the chance of arms, and condemn the authors of the French revolution to the everlaſting horror of mankind, notwithſtanding the dazzling ſucceſſes of its fanatic armies. The only atonement I can make for my preſumption is to confeſs it, and to offer this ſlender tribute at the ſhrine which wiſdom and virtue are preparing for their votary in the temple of Immortality. Some ignorant fanatics have raiſed a clamour about conſiſtency, which would oppoſe a falſe ſhame to the progreſs of the human mind, and bind a man down to his firſt opinions, notwithſtanding the increaſing wiſdom of years, and the new facts that may ariſe on the theatre of the world. All propoſitions in politics, as well as in every other ſcience, are abridged expreſſions of facts; and a perſon might as well begin a courſe of chymical experiments, reſolving to be of the ſame opinion at the end he was at the beginning, as take a pride in preſerving an uniformity of ſentiment through a long ſucceſſion of intereſting events in the political world. A variety of cauſes have crowded more political inſtruction within theſe laſt ten years, than is per-

haps ſcattered over the reſt of hiſtory; and I cannot think highly of that mind which has remained ſtationary during the progreſs of the French revolution. But I cannot make uſe of the apology, which I readily allow is fair and candid in others whom I have heard avail themſelves of it, that their deteſtation of the French government and principles, in the year 1799, is perfectly conſiſtent with their admiration of them ten years ago, ſince the thing is entirely changed; and that they alone are inconſiſtent, who, admiring what is called a monarchy then, admire what is called a republic now; and applaud with the ſame enthuſiaſm the ſucceſſes of the French armies at preſent, and the ambitious military ſpirit which their government has diſplayed, as they at that period commended the pacific ſpirit the firſt Aſſembly was ſuppoſed to manifeſt in their entire renunciation of conqueſts *. I make no ſuch apology

* In order to comprehend the nature of this uncalled for declaration, we muſt attend a little to the hiſtory of the French revolution: The party which prevailed in the firſt Aſſembly was chiefly compoſed of metaphyſicians, or, as they called themſelves, philoſophers, who came to the government of men and the conduct of great affairs, wild with all the crude ſpeculations which they had learnt in their cloſets. They conſidered human ſociety as a *tabula raſa*, on which they might ſcribble all their fantaſtic notions and ridiculous theories. Preſumption is ever the characteriſtic of this ſet of men. The municipal law of France, compoſed partly of the old Roman civil law, and partly of the provincial cuſtoms of the kingdom, methodized and applied to particular caſes by a ſucceſſion of learned men, was one of the firſt objects on which they exerciſed their ſpirit of philoſophic legiſlation. They did not find it to agree with any of their theories. Accordingly, by one ſweeping decree, they aboliſhed this ſyſtem of artificial equity which had grown up under the guide of experience by the accumulated wiſdom of ages. Thus they left individuals without any regulation in their private concerns,

apology—I frankly confeſs my error. I admired, in the year 1789, what I now think was at that time ſo far from admirable, that it was deteſtable. I entertain ſentiments in the higheſt degree hoſtile to the ſect which predominated in the firſt Aſſembly of France. I think they planted the ſeeds of all the ſubſequent diſorders. That ſpecious philoſophy, which, appealing to firſt principles, and ſuperſeding all poſitive inſtitution, then ſeduced me by the ſoothing cant of humanity * which it ſpoke, appears

concerns, ſociety without any of the ties or holdings which keep it together: then aroſe the men of violence and blood, who by a juſt diſpenſation of Providence ſent whole ſets of theſe prating philoſophers to the guillotine. Bold and barefaced robbery and murder entered by the breach which ſhallow ſpeculation had made. Once the community was ſet looſe from every reſtraint of law and religion; men who were not amuſed by empty declamations, but went ſtraight forward to their purpoſe, of courſe prevailed. It is the order of things in this confuſed and diſtracted ſtate of ſociety: Thucydides remarked it in ancient Greece; modern France affords another terrible example of it: a Condorcet, a Briſſot, a Vergniaud, go before —a Danton, a Robeſpierre, follow.

* It is remarkable that this cant of humanity has generally preceded the moſt ſavage cruelties. Nero lamented in the beginning of his reign, that he was able to write, as he was thereby compelled to ſign the death-warrants of criminals. Robeſpierre, ſoon after he entered upon the public ſtage, propoſed the abolition of the puniſhment of death. A work which that ex-tyrant Barrere publiſhed about two years ago, is extremely humorous in this reſpect; that atrocious wretch, whoſe crimes have no parallel † in hiſtory, who is judged too bad for the Council of Elders or Youngſters (I forget which), ſpeaks of the pure heart-felt ſatisfaction which he reſerves for his declining years, when his heirs ſhall have grown gray under perſecution, to read the vindication of his calumniated innocence in the circle of his weeping family. One would think we were peruſing the language of virtuous diſcontent, coming from ſome venerable Cato retiring from the ingratitude of mankind.

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† See, for the odious mixture of libertiniſm and cruelty which marked the government of this man, a ſhort pamphlet by one Villat, an ex-juror of the Revolutionary Tribunal of Paris, publiſhed ſoon after the fall of Robeſpierre.

pears to me the prime cauſe of all the maſſacres at which humanity ſhudders; and can find no palliative, but in the apologies of men who would excuſe the cruelties of Nero, if he had bethought himſelf to call his government a republic, and his adminiſtration liberty.

Theſe are the ſentiments which I have not called up to ſerve the purpoſe of the preſent day, but which I have proclaimed as my firm and ardent conviction for theſe three years paſt, to the knowledge of all my acquaintances. If to be loyal a man muſt be mercileſs; if nothing but ferocity and cruelty can diſplay his zeal for the beſt of conſtitutions, I am willing to forfeit my pretenſions to the character of a loyal ſubject; my only conſolation is, that I fare no worſe than Lord Somers would have done, had he lived in the preſent day; he certainly would have been a little ſurpriſed to hear the example of ſavage, republican * France, propoſed for the imitation of a Parliament ſuppoſed to be animated by a Britiſh ſpirit. I think he would have judged that

The works of Rouſſeau have been very pernicious in this reſpect; they have taught the ſcoundrels of the preſent day to blend the jargon of ſentiment with the perpetration of the greateſt crimes.

* I call it republican in conformity with popular language, but I will never allow that that ſtrange medley of deſpotiſm and licentiouſneſs bears any more reſemblance to are public, than our conſul at Algiers to the conſuls of ancient Rome;—by the bye, the Algerines call their government a republic too. A work is wanting from the pen of ſome genuine and enlightened friend of that ancient and reſpectable form of government, to vindicate it from the inſult offered to it by the uſurpers in France, giving its name to their flagitious denomination.

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it did not become the government of his country to contend with the moſt flagitious of tyrants on their own element of blood and oppreſſion, that juſtice and humanity ought to be inſcribed on the banners of the allies, as murder and cruelty ſtalk in the van of their enemy. There would be ſomething plauſible in the oppoſite idea, if we ſuppoſe that we could be ſucceſsful in this competition of unjuſt violence; but who is there but muſt deſpair, when he thinks of the rivals he has to encounter?

A comfortable thickneſs of ſkull, and an adamantine hardneſs of heart, might do much; and perhaps we might produce ſome gentlemen who would ſtruggle hard for victory, and ſave their honour even in defeat; but I am afraid our cold climate and northern ſoil can produce nothing ſo ripe and finiſhed as injuſtice and vice raiſed in the hot-bed of libertiniſm and metaphyſics. Refiners in wickedneſs muſt ever have a great ſuperiority over dulneſs blundering into wrong; mere natural untutored depravity can never reach the ſublime flights of ſpeculative ſyſtematic profligacy. I think, therefore, that we had better not enter into the conteſt;—plain, ſtraight-forward probity is more ſuited to the natural turn of our genius. If as much pains were taken to re-eſtabliſh concord, as are taken to maintain diſſenſion, our politicians would be ſurpriſed how far they advanced by following the eaſy road of common ſenſe.

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I have ſaid enough, and perhaps my reader may judge I have ſaid too much, on the ſubject of my loyalty. The prevailing language of theſe unfortunate times will excuſe this egotiſm;—I know no other excuſe.

I cannot reſiſt the temptation of here proclaiming my long and intimate friendſhip with a man who has rendered the moſt eſſential ſervice to morality and civil order, by bringing genuine metaphyſics to the aid of law and eſtabliſhment, and deſtroying all the ſophiſtry by which they were aſſailed. I am not likely to have learnt the maxims of rebellion in the familiar intercourſe which ſubſiſted between us, in which we converſed on moſt political ſubjects, and ſeldom found our opinions diſagree. Mr. Mackintoſh will receive with his uſual indulgence this tribute of genuine eſteem and affection from a friend who would have rendered this little work much more perfect if he had had the benefit of his remarks.

I have left my taſk unfiniſhed—I have criticized with freedom the ſyſtems propoſed by others to remedy the evils of our condition, and I have not pointed out the advantages of the meaſure which I defend. I am no optimiſt in politics any more than philoſophy. I do not aſſert this to be the beſt of all poſſible worlds, and I am far from announcing the ſcheme propoſed as the beſt of all poſſible ſchemes.

If I found my countrymen united in ſuch a manner that I could call them one people ; if the higher and lower claſſes were not divided by every ſentiment which exerciſes a dominion over the human mind ; if to every cauſe of ſeparation ariſing from the concerns of this earth, were not added the proſpects of futurity, as if their animoſity ſought to maintain itſelf in the regions beyond the grave ; if I did not ſee contempt and averſion above—a rooted malevolence below, occaſionally breaking out through all the reſtraints which provoked and irritated authority would heap upon it—if I could look for any remedy to the misfortunes of our condition in this gloomy and melancholy proſpect, I ſhould not look abroad for relief.

As a general propoſition I ſubſcribe to its truth, that it is better for a nation to govern itſelf than to be governed by foreigners. Do not the particular circumſtances of Ireland form an exception ?

True, there will not be that cloſe and endearing connexion which ſubſiſts between the people of England and their repreſentatives : the moſt ſanguine friend to the Union cannot promiſe that ; but at leaſt we ſhall be delivered from the empire of prejudice and reſentment. The Parliament of Great Britain ſpeaks the opinion of the Britiſh public. Our grievances will be fairly canvaſſed and examined on a large theatre, and a free and enlightened people will be our judges. I am not ſure that ſome

ſpirit of national animoſity and rivalry will not corrupt the integrity of their judgments; but I appeal to every reflecting Iriſhman whether we ſhall meet with as many prejudices as we have at preſent to encounter. If the choice were between an Engliſh and a fair Iriſh public, I ſhould not heſitate; but that is not the alternative propoſed to the people of Ireland, but between a neighbouring enlightened nation, and a ſet of men, born indeed in the ſame country, but having no connexion of habit, religion, ſcarcely of language with them, hating, deſpiſing them, deriving from the circumſtance of being born within the ſame geographical arrangement with them, only every local prejudice and every local animoſity. If there is any thing which may fairly be called a public opinion influencing and controlling the Parliament of this kingdom, I give up the whole argument. I ſpeak not of the opinion of a few corporations or grand juries, which comes loaded with all the poiſon of party rancour, but a public opinion ſpeaking the ſentiments and feelings of the bulk of the people, if, poor wretches! they have any ſentiments or feelings left.

This is the ground on which I ſtand, in defending the meaſure of an Union; and I truſt I do not depart from the ſentiments of a good Iriſhman in ſo doing. It has been one of the arts of the opponents of this ſalutary plan to aſſume the whole merit of patriotiſm to themſelves, and ſtigmatize every one who would throw off the iron yoke of party government,

vernment, either as a partiſan of rebellion, or a ſervile ſupporter of the Miniſter. I do not wonder that thoſe who, for a ſeries of years, have enjoyed all the benefits of this government, ſhould wiſh to retain it, and endeavour to raiſe a popular cry in its favour; but that they who have long crouched beneath their government, who have received nothing but oppreſſion and inſult at the hands of the ruling faction, who were yeſterday ſmarting under their laſh, with their ſtripes ſtill freſh upon their backs *, ſhould raiſe an uproar in defence of the deſpotiſm from which the kindneſs of Providence would deliver them, and turn againſt their benefactors and ſaviours:—ſuch credulity and folly may truly ſeem ſurpriſing; but I truſt the eyes of the people will ſoon be open, that they will acknowledge with gratitude the mild and beneficent ſpirit which dictated the ſcheme of the Union. Future generations of Iriſhmen will bleſs the memory of the Miniſter who propoſed it.

There has been a great deal of zeal diſplayed about Catholic Emancipation. I have already obſerved that the term is improper; it means the admiſſion of the Catholics to political power: little benefit would deſcend to the great body of the community—no, not for a century to come. An Union will really emancipate the Iriſh people; it will emancipate them from party government; it will eman-

* This is more than metaphor.

cipate them from the tyranny of paſſion, from the deſpotiſm of prejudice. Some judgment may be formed of the complexion of a meaſure from thoſe who ſupport it, and thoſe who oppoſe it. It would be ſtrange if thoſe to whoſe interpoſition we owe, in ſome degree, our ſafety, whoſe mild and paternal government has reſtored ſome happineſs to this country, ſhould on a ſudden have conceived the project of our deſtruction; and they whoſe fury was lately ready to fall upon our heads, who cannot conceal their malevolence, even when they would aſſume the appearance of friendſhip, and betray their old love of diſſenſion even in their invitations to concord—if they ſhould be the moſt zealous for our welfare. Who are they who deafen the public ear with their cries againſt an Union? who, for the firſt time in their lives, remember that they are Iriſhmen, when they would work up our Iriſh paſſions and Iriſh prejudices to ſerve their purpoſes? Are not the principal of them men, who but yeſterday were loud and vehement in puſhing on every meaſure of violence and perſecution; who would ſoon have reigned over the waſted fields and ſmoking cottages of depopulated Ireland, had it not been for the ſeaſonable arrival of our venerable Chief Governor?

I will not commemorate the mild virtues of that noble perſon; he is too high for panegyric; but if theſe accents of love and reſpect from the moſt humble, but not the leaſt fervent of his admirers, ſhould

ſhould gain an audience from his illuſtrious ear, I would tell him, that whatever have been the achievements of a life dedicated to the ſervice of his King and country, Ireland has been the ſcene of his proudeſt triumphs. The olive of peace which he has planted in this country will afford a nobler ſhade to ſhelter his venerable age, and flouriſh to ſucceeding ages a more glorious monument to his poſterity, than all the laurels which he gathered in the fields of India. The monſter of religious fanaticiſm, which indicates its approaching fate by the laſt convulſive ſtruggles it exerts, was a more formidable enemy than the tyrant which he overcame in thoſe diſtant regions; and if the ſhouts of armies ſhall proclaim the victorious Chieftain, the voice of a grateful people ſhall hail the mild and tolerant Viceroy.

I turn with reluctance from ſo intereſting a ſubject, to anſwer the cavils of peeviſh and ſplenetic objectors. There are men who will acknowledge the evils of our condition, nay, if poſſible, will exaggerate them; but they will contend that it is England which has purpoſely heaped theſe misfortunes upon our heads, in order to compel us to an Union, as the only remedy to which we can reſort; and therefore, out of ſpite and vexation, we ought to be averſe from a meaſure which England ſeems ſo ardently to have deſired. It is ſingular in this objection, that if it reſted upon a fact, as it does

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not, it would prove nothing; but it is as falſe in its premiſes as it is impotent in its concluſion.

England, it is true, has been obliged to tolerate, but has never promoted the oppreſſion under which this country has laboured; on the contrary, it has uniformly interpoſed to ſoften and mitigate it.

We ſhall be at no loſs to diſcover from whom this oppreſſion proceeded, when we conſider that the majority of this nation has for centuries paſt been governed by men who differed from them in religion —who at once feared and deſpiſed them.

Perhaps this complete ſeparation of the governors and the governed, originated from the Engliſh conqueſt; but being once eſtabliſhed, all the conſequences naturally flowed. It is of no importance to go back to the reign of King John, for the purpoſe of venting our ſpleen againſt England. It is worſe than idle to be putting poſſible caſes, entirely wide of the real ſtate of facts, and to ſay, if we never had any connexion with England, we ſhould not ſtand in our preſent ſingular predicament; the government would have ariſen from the boſom of the people, and there would be the natural connexion between the rulers and the ruled. I ſhall not ſtay to examine how far the conſequences of this ſuppoſition are well or ill deduced; all I maintain is, that ſince the government of the country has been erected on its preſent baſis, the paſſions of

our own countrymen have alone produced the oppreſſion we have endured; and that the influence of England has been rather exerted in counteracting than aggravating their preſſure.

I am the more convinced, that the circumſtance which foreigners muſt obſerve, and all good Iriſhmen lament, of Ireland's being behindhand with every nation of Europe in the condition of her people, is owing to the peculiar feature in her government, of being entirely diſtinct and ſeparate from the nation, by remarking, that this was her unfortunate condition even before the difference of religion exiſted.

Previous to the Reformation, and before the diſtinction of ſects could poſſibly have ariſen, the evils of a party-government were felt, in the authority which the Engliſh ſettlers exerciſed over the aboriginal inhabitants. This may lend ſome plauſibility to the ſpleen and vehemence of thoſe politicians who repreſent the Engliſh nation as the cauſe of all our misfortunes. But I have nothing more to do with antique grievances, than I have to do with imaginary caſes. The acrimony of religious diſſenſion has been ſuperadded to the animoſity of different originals, or rather, the latter diſtinction has been entirely loſt in the former. Our governors are our own countrymen, and very few conſider whether their anceſtors came over from England, or were a part of the ancient inhabitants of the country. But the evil

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is, that though the governors are for the moſt part born in the ſame country with the governed, this does not give riſe to any tie of connexion between them; on the contrary, it only inflames the ſpirit of party, which has produced the miſery of the latter.

I have already obſerved, that England is obliged to tolerate this party-government. It is a truth of which we ought not to loſe ſight, that an Iriſh Parliament, entirely independent, cannot exiſt, conſiſtently with the preſent condition of the empire. It is eſſential to the nature of our connexion with the ſiſter kingdom, that the Engliſh Cabinet ſhould poſſeſs a directing and controlling influence in every queſtion of imperial importance. Without this influence, the connexion between the two countries would be ſoon diſſolved—Ireland would break looſe from England. They who have the word Independence ſo often in their mouths, have been too long behind the curtain not to know, that Iriſh independence is a mere phantom. They are not ſuch novices in the world as they pretend to be; they mimic the liſp of ſimplicity but awkwardly. They are not the dupes of the fine words with which they would cajole us. As the Athenian woman diſcovered Theophraſtus not to be an Athenian, by the affectation with which he atticiſed, we know theſe gentlemen to be but recruits in the popular band, by their perpetual vociferation of popular words—An Union!—or, No Union! Great Britain muſt, in fact, legiſlate for Ireland; ſhe muſt legiſlate, either directly, by the union of the Parliaments, or indirectly

rectly through the medium of our Parliament. It becomes the duty of a Miniſter of Great Britain, as ſuch, to ſecure that influence over the votes of the two Houſes, as will perpetuate the connexion between the countries. The individual therefore, who happens to be Miniſter, cannot be conſidered as criminal to the Iriſh people, whatever meaſures he purſues or tolerates for this purpoſe. However his perſonal feelings may revolt, he is bound by a neceſſity inherent in his office.

I know I ſhall depart from the eſtabliſhed jargon of political ſpeculation, when I conceive a politician may be actuated in any meaſure by a virtuous motive. Our pamphleteers, if they are not ſo profound as Tacitus, are every jot as malicious. They refine upon human iniquity by ſyſtem, and repreſent every public man under the worſt colours by rule. I ſhall run a riſk of being thought a dupe, or, what is worſe, a mean diſſembler, affecting the language of ſimplicity, when I ſuppoſe the Miniſter may have been led to the project of the Union by ſome regard to the welfare of this country. But whatever may have been his motives, it is more important for us to inquire, whether we are not, in point of fact, in a ſtate of dependance at preſent, and dependance upon the worſt terms. I ſuppoſe I need not go about to prove, that the will of the Britiſh Miniſter is the law of our Parliament, in every queſtion in which he conceives it worth his while to make known his will. This is a propoſition, which, like the firſt prin-

ciples of philoſophy, cannot gain, but muſt loſe in its evidence by every injudicious attempt at demonſtration.

But it may be proper for us to conſider, how this uniform ſubmiſſion is obtained, how national rivalry and animoſity is lulled aſleep; and legiſlators independent in theory, are rendered dependant in practice. This is a queſtion which I am neither qualified nor deſirous fully to evolve. My habits of life have not put me in a ſituation to know much of the nauſeous detail of corruption; and if my knowledge extended further, it would ill become an independent pen to gratify a malicious curioſity by the diſplay. But there is a branch of this queſtion which falls immediately within the ſcope of theſe obſervations. We cannot thoroughly underſtand the nature of the party-government which prevails in Ireland, unleſs we beſtow ſome attention upon it.

I ſay then, that one of the means by which the Britiſh Miniſter obtains the ſupport of a large majority in our two Houſes of Parliament, is by tolerating that empire of prejudice and paſſion, to which I conceive all the evils of our condition are to be attributed. This kind of bargain or contract ſubſiſts between the Miniſter and the members of the miniſterial majority: Support me in queſtions which I deem eſſential to my intereſt, and to the connexion between the two kingdoms which I am bound to maintain, and in every queſtion of mere domeſtic regulation give a full looſe to all your paſſions and prejudices; nay, when you

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go down to your counties, exercise uncontrolled dominion over all your neighbours; discharge your animosity upon every object of your displeasure;—your support of me indemnifies you for every offence you may commit, either from party or personal feeling, against the person or property of the subject.

It is with extreme reluctance I throw off the veil from our unfortunate condition. Persons, who, like the writer of these remarks, would wish to respect every thing that is established, and are afraid to encroach upon the limits of obedience and loyalty, while they discuss the evils of a mal-administration, labour under considerable difficulties in the investigation of this question. Few of the opponents of the Union impose any of these restraints upon themselves; they permit themselves unbounded petulance, in railing at every thing that comes in the way of their arguments. But this example does not give any sanction to licentiousness on the other side.

I am not certain I have been as correct as I wish to be; but if I give offence, I wish my readers to believe it is not intentional: I wish to keep clear of the difficulties of my situation, but I may be deficient in skill and dexterity.

One of the parties in this bargain, the Minister, I think, may be fairly excused by the necessity of his office. Theorists may launch their readers on the wide ocean of metaphysics, and talk a great deal of

virtue and vice in the abſtract; but whoever ſtudies morals, not as a ſource of idle diſquiſitions, but as a practical ſcience, will form his judgment of the conduct of men, with a perpetual reference to circumſtances and ſituations. The Miniſter of England is a ſubject of the Britiſh empire, and may be expected to pay ſome regard to all the nations, and all the various portions of territory ſubject to our common ſovereign; but he may be ſuppoſed to feel a regard of preference for the country that is immediately the object of his care. I have already obſerved, that it is his primary duty to maintain the connexion between Great Britain and Ireland; and the unfortunate circumſtances of our preſent condition make it neceſſary for him to employ for this purpoſe means inconſiſtent with our welfare.

It is not ſo eaſy, perhaps, to excuſe the conduct of our own members; but ſatire and invective are not the deſign of theſe Obſervations. I think it will be for the advantage of the people of this country to be delivered from a government in which human frailty has not been found proof againſt the force of temptation; and their happineſs may pay for every deviation from morality on the part of their rulers.

I have the authority of ſome of the moſt illuſtrious friends of Iriſh liberty, that this ſtatement is juſt. Their names would add ſplendour to theſe pages, but would convict me of preſumption if I ventured to mention them on this occaſion; they have aſſured me, that,

that, to their certain knowledge, the Iriſh part of the Cabinet were conſtantly preſſing on violent and ſanguinary meaſures, and Engliſh influence had need to exert all its power to reſtrain their fury within any reaſonable bounds.

But granting that the reverſe were the truth, that England was chargeable with all the ſufferings we have endured, that to the rancour of Engliſh hoſtility was owing the peculiar ſpirit of bitterneſs which marks our religious and civil animoſities, and that thoſe benevolent ſtateſmen, who, ſince they have been threatened with a loſs of the domination they have long exerciſed, have turned patriots upon our hands, had been conſtantly employed in ſoftening our grievances, and pouring balm into our wounds; the queſtion is not, againſt whom we ſhall vent our ſpleen, but what is the beſt practicable mode of bettering ourſelves. States are not like individuals in this reſpect—we pardon ſome warmth of reſentment, ſome glow of paſſion in the character of a man in ſociety; nay, we require it in that nice mixture of balanced qualities which compoſes an amiable and accompliſhed perſon. There are failings ariſing from the efferveſcence of blood, which, particularly in youth, are ſeemly and decorous—the character wants life and animation, without them; the colours lie flat upon the canvaſs. What man of genius who does not prefer the ſpirited incorrectneſs of an Italian maſter to the dull regularity of a Dutch painter? This is an obſervation of Hume, and he inſtances that amiable and heroic prince,

Henry

Henry IV. of France. We like him the better for what a bigot or pedant might think failings in his life; we ſhould not take ſuch a lively intereſt in his various fortunes, if the attractions of the beautiful Gabrielle had not ſoftened his lion heart. It is a delightful image to the fancy to repreſent to ourſelves a youthful hero covered with blood and duſt, throwing himſelf at the feet of an accompliſhed miſtreſs. We ſhould, no doubt, have been prodigiouſly edified, and probably thrown into a comfortable doze, if Henry IV. had written a long pious homily to the woman whoſe beauty he adored, exhorting her to chaſtity, and a number of other excellent virtues; but we feel a pleaſing warmth ſtealing about our hearts, and regret the age of beautiful illuſions, when we read the letter of that gallant and warlike prince to his miſtreſs on the eve of a battle which was to decide the fate of his kingdom:—"If I fall, my laſt thought ſhall be of God, "and my laſt but one of you."

Voltaire, who of all men beſt knew how to mix up the ingredients of human flattery into the moſt agreeable doſes, never loſes ſight of this truth, ariſing from a nice knowledge of the human heart; he does not alone celebrate the qualities which we approve of, but thoſe which we blame and love.

Richardſon, on the contrary, by not attending to this principle, conſtantly fails, whatever pains he takes to exhibit perfect characters; he ſometimes gains the verdict

verdict of our judgment; he never ſucceeds in warming our hearts.

Theſe reflections may diſpleaſe ſome readers as but little connected with the ſubject; but the lovers of literature will pardon me, if I ſometimes relieve the dryneſs of a political diſcuſſion, by turning to topics of greater elegance and amenity.

I have conſidered what the heart recogniſes as ſeemly and lovely in a human character; but none of theſe ſallies of paſſion are pardonable in the conduct of a ſtate. A ſtate is a moral artificial perſon; it is a contrivance of reaſon for purpoſes which fall alone under the cognizance of reaſon; it ought to be like the Goddeſs, which, in the imaginations of poets, repreſented juſtice, without feeling and without paſſion. That cold phlegmatic attention to intereſt which we but little reliſh in private life, is the only allowable conduct of a nation; we ought not, therefore, to conſider what feelings we ought to entertain towards England, but ſoberly and diſpaſſionately examine whether any way is open to us for improving our condition but by a Union of the Parliaments; and it is of importance not to forget, that, after all, the queſtion is not between a ſtate of perfect independence, and ſubjection to Engliſh legiſlation. We are now governed by influence, as in the event of an Union we ſhall be governed by regular Acts of Parliament, ſo that the queſtion reſolves itſelf into this:—Which is it better for us to be governed by, the Engliſh Miniſter, acting

ſecretly by the means I have deſcribed, and by others which the reader will eaſily conceive, through the medium of our two Houſes, or by a fair unprejudiced Engliſh public, ſpeaking by the organ of the Engliſh Parliament? and we muſt not go back to other times, and conſider what we may conceive to have been the growing proſperity of Ireland before the late rebellion. We muſt take Ireland as ſhe is at this moment; bleeding under the conſequences of a ſuppreſſed inſurrection, affected as ſhe muſt be in common with the reſt of Europe by the revolution in France; in fine, acted upon by all the events domeſtic and foreign which have lately paſſed before our eyes. This is not a queſtion on which we may give a looſe to our imaginations; we are bound up in ſpace and time; we are limited by every conſideration which muſt ariſe on a queſtion of conduct; we are to conſider not only what is right, but what is expedient; what is deſirable, but what is practicable. We are to look at Ireland with all her circumſtances about her. We are not to forget the diſſenſions and animoſities which prevail among her people. The feelings of the governors and the governed, relatively to each other, nay, the characters of public men, ought not to eſcape us. There is not a topic of political importance which Iriſhmen ought not ſoberly and diſpaſſionately to examine, before they come to a deciſion; then let them decide.

It is often aſked, when we ſhall ſee the mighty conſequences that are promiſed from an Union.

None

None but a ridiculous viſionary will promiſe, that a Union will operate as a taliſman, and ſuddenly cure all the evils of our condition; but it will deliver us from the preſſure of a party-government. And if, as I have endeavoured to ſhow, a party-government is the great cauſe why Ireland has not profited of all the advantages which nature, with a liberal hand, has poured out upon her, why ſhe has not kept pace with the other countries of Europe in ſocial improvements, with a great natural ſuperiority over moſt of them, we may reaſonably hope, when this cauſe of our calamities is removed, that we ſhall riſe to our natural level. That wit and hilarity, for which Iriſhmen are ſo celebrated, will no longer be employed in animating the exceſſes of nocturnal debauch, but the vigour of mind from which they proceed being turned into the channel of regular, ſober induſtry, will bring commerce into our ports, and diffuſe agriculture over our bogs. Iriſhmen will no longer wander a race of ſuſpected exiles, depending upon the ſucceſs of an intrigue for a diſhonourable livelihood, but aſſume a ſtate of true honour and dignity in cultivating the domeſtic virtues at home. That valour, which now, ſpending itſelf in nocturnal brawls and private quarrels, often carries deſolation into the boſom of private families, and converts the manſion of gaiety into the houſe of mourning, will exert itſelf in repreſſing and humbling the wicked and implacable enemy of the civilized world. Perhaps theſe are the illuſions of a heated fancy—perhaps the event will diſprove theſe predictions of a patriotic enthuſiaſm; but this, at

leaſt, is the fervent prayer of one who has no intereſt to promote but the welfare of his country, who can declare, in the ſincerity of his heart, that he never formed a wiſh or harboured a ſentiment inconſiſtent with what he conceived the happineſs of his fellow-creatures.

I have done with the ſubject of the Union, which has already exerciſed many pens, and which will perhaps receive little additional light from theſe ſpeculations. But I ſhould not ſatisfy the motive which originally led me to this undertaking, to contribute my mite to the peace and tranquillity of my country, if I did not offer ſome reflections on the character and genius of the prevailing religion of the people, and conſider the tendency of the aſſociations ſtyling themſelves *Orange*.

The Catholic religion has, at different times, been attacked by a number of enemies of various deſcriptions; but it has never been charged, before theſe times, with favouring the doctrines of infidelity, or authorizing the pretenſions of rebellious ſubjects. Some perſons, whoſe ſentiments were hoſtile to it, have ſuſpected that it was the natural enemy of civil liberty. But never hitherto has it been thought, that authority had any thing to dread from its character and genius. If we look at its hiſtory, we ſhall find it uniformly on the ſide of magiſtracy. So convinced were the authors of the revolution in France of its tendency to counteract their views, that it was a familiar

miliar maxim with them, *Il faut decatholiciſer la France.* It will not be the leaſt curious among the ſingularities of this eventful period, that a religion, which was formerly ſuppoſed to maintain the divine and indefeaſible right of kings, and which was made the object of legiſlative perſecution on that account, ſhould now be conceived to incline to the new-fangled notions of liberty and the rights of man. He would be an ingenious ſpeculator, that would trace any connexion between the volumes of Sir Robert Filmer and the licentious metaphyſics of l'Abbé Sieyes.

It was an obſervation of, perhaps, the largeſt and moſt pregnant mind that ever ſurveyed the hiſtory of man, that thoſe religions which had long been under the protection of authority, were naturally inclined to favour its prerogatives; whereas the principles of popular reſiſtance might perhaps be traced in thoſe ſyſtems of worſhip which had grown up againſt eſtabliſhment, and had originally been the objects of a coercive and reſtraining policy on the part of the magiſtrate. Apply this principle to the preſent caſe. Is that religion, which was once the ſole governing religion of Europe, a religion of rebellion? It might moderate the exceſſes of power, to mark the ſpirit of retributive juſtice which ſeems to run along with the ſtream of time. We are now defending the Catholic religion, as not the enemy of authority; and there was a time when any act of offence againſt it was thought to argue the moſt rebellious diſpoſition in the ſubject. Cardinal Bentivoglio, who, after the

manner of the ancient hiſtorians, puts ſpeeches in the mouths of the actors in his ſtory analogous to their ſeveral characters, and, as he conceived, expreſſive of their ſentiments, repreſents the Duke of Alva as uttering an opinion to this effect: That iron ſoldier, whoſe heart was never aſſailed by fear, as his bowels never melted to compaſſion, little thought, when he employed fire and ſword againſt the Reformation, that perſons of the ſame tenets as thoſe he ſo rigidly proſcribed, and which alone he deemed compatible with the prerogatives of his ſovereign, would in their turn be purſued by irritated authority, as its natural and incorrigible enemies. This example is enough to make the ſterneſt advocate for ſeverity tremble. A God of ſevere and terrible juſtice preſides over the concerns of this earth: he makes the poſterity of the guilty accountable for the ſins of their fathers, and often at a diſtant period raiſes up the objects of perſecution, to be the inſtruments of retaliation on the heads of thoſe whoſe mercileſs government they had formerly endured.

We have only to regard a little the Catholic religion, to be convinced that it is the fartheſt poſſible from any connexion with infidelity. It exerciſes the faith of its votaries more than any other ſyſtem of worſhip; it keeps human reaſon under a ſeverer control, and exacts a more implicit and uniform ſubmiſſion of the underſtanding to authority. It accordingly was the form of Chriſtianity which the infidels of

of France particularly deteſted: it was that of which they had chiefly felt the preſſure, and which they were moſt anxious to deſtroy. Indeed, their enmity to Chriſtianity was principally excited by the Catholic religion; and it was through the ſides of the latter that they attacked the former. That theſe were the ſentiments of d'Alembert, Diderot, and the other original champions of diſbelief, appears from a paſſage out of the late Lord Orford's correſpondence, which was publiſhed ſome time ago in one of our papers; and that their ſucceſſors, the Condorcets, the Briſſots of the preſent day, did not depart from them, may be gathered from their ſpeeches and writings.

A Catholic prieſt muſt therefore be the weakeſt of all weak beings, who in any degree lends himſelf to the views of the French rulers. What has been the fate of his brethren in France? They have partly been maſſacred, and ſuch as have eſcaped from the daggers that were brandiſhed for their deſtruction, live upon the bounty of men, aliens indeed from their particular mode of faith, but united with them in the community of the Chriſtian religion.

Let it not be ſaid that Catholics are faithful to princes of their own perſuaſion, but rebellious to governors whom they regard as heretics.

It might formerly be a point of contention which particular form of Chriſtianity ſhould prevail: ſects had leiſure to tear each other to pieces about ſpeculative

lative tenets. But theſe differences ſhould ceaſe now that a more important queſtion has ariſen in the European world. The followers of Chriſt ſhould now be united:—they are united in the attack, and ſhould be united in the defence. It is only in this unfortunate iſland that the conteſt is about the Catholic and Proteſtant modes of faith. Every where elſe the matter diſputed is, whether there ſhall be any Chriſtianity at all in the world.

We may ſay that the genius of religious fanaticiſm has imprinted upon our ſoil his laſt lingering footſteps; but we might diſpenſe with his parting viſit. He is not like Aſtrea: he will not leave behind him a number of happy human beings to regret his departure:—I am afraid blood and deſtruction are the only marks by which we ſhall trace that he has been there. This leads me to conſider the principles of his votaries. A number of perſons have aſſociated together to worſhip him in a ſolemn manner, and they have aſſumed the name of Orange Clubs!

If theſe Obſervations ſhould ever reach any readers out of Ireland, they will be very apt to miſtake the nature of theſe Orange Clubs: they may conceive they are aſſociations of perſons who meet to celebrate the memory of King William. If this was their object, ſo far from condemning them, I ſhould be among the moſt zealous and forward to ſolicit admiſſion into one of them.

I venerate

I venerate—I adore the memory of King William. If a ray of liberty ſtill continues to cheer the ſocial world of Europe,—if the whole of that precious fire has not been extinguiſhed in the preſent conteſt between lawleſs force and eſtabliſhed authority, it is to the unwearied exertions of that illuſtrious prince we are indebted for it. With valour and patience, which neither adverſity could break nor diſappointment weary, he perſevered to defend the independence of Europe againſt the enterpriſes of that weak and vain monarch Louis XIV. A ſaying of his, when his native country (Holland) was invaded by the moſt formidable armies then in the world, and deſpondency began to communicate itſelf to the ſtouteſt hearts, ſhould, particularly at the preſent period, be impreſſed on the breaſts of all ſovereigns. Happy if his example could rouſe them to that fortitude which is neceſſary to meet the dangers they have to encounter. "I am determined," ſaid he, "to die in the laſt dike "of my country." A calm phlegmatic conſtancy marked the whole of his conduct. He ſeemed to riſe above the ſphere of human paſſions: his courage was without oſtentation; vanity never dictated any of his enterpriſes; deliberate and collected in the cabinet—intrepid in the field. His plans were contrived with wiſdom, and executed with boldneſs. He was often defeated—never diſgraced. He had great generals to contend with—fortune deſerted him; but her caprices never had power over his reputation. Let it not be forgotten by thoſe who make uſe of his name to cover their narrow bigotry,

that

that in age of religious animoſities, a benignant, tolerant ſpirit was a diſtinguiſhing feature in his character. What would he have thought, if, in that country where his victorious hand planted not the tree of modern liberty watered with blood, but the protecting ſhade of the Britiſh Conſtitution, he had ſeen perſons who called themſelves Chriſtians, when their common God and Saviour was attacked by a conſpiracy of infidel fanatics, abandoning the cauſe of the general defence, and perſecuting each other with all the virulence of bigotry run mad? You who admire King William, ſtudy a little the hiſtory of his life; do not all that lies in you to diſgrace, by your ſtupid ignorance, the object of your veneration.

I ſhall not adopt any vague contradicted reports in explaining the nature of the Orange Clubs. Fabulous enormities will, no doubt, be imputed by popular malice to perſons affecting a myſterious ſecrecy. Thus, no doubt, the ancient Templars were calumniated in the reports of the times; and perhaps this principle may have operated in the late accounts which have been publiſhed reſpecting the Free-Maſons and illuminated ſocieties of the preſent day. If the Orange Clubs were no more than aſſociations to aſſiſt the executive magiſtrate in the exerciſe of his government, I ſhould not be very ſevere in my ſtrictures upon them.

I cer-

I certainly do not approve of ſuch aſſociations in quiet times. I think that any inſtitution which would carry the little prejudices and paſſions of private life into the diſpenſation of public juſtice, is not on general principles agreeable to the ſpirit of wiſe government, and that it is particularly repugnant to the genius of the Britiſh Conſtitution. The Britiſh Conſtitution has at its head an executive magiſtrate, who is ſuch by hereditary right.

Paine has flung a great deal of low illiberal abuſe on hereditary government; but ſome of the wiſeſt thinkers that ever enlightened the world have been ſtrong in their commendations of it, and chiefly upon this principle—that by the law of hereditary ſucceſſion, the magiſtrate is qualified to exerciſe an elevated, unprejudiced ſpirit in the adminiſtration of the laws. He does not come to his office warm with all the animoſities and partialities, which he would probably derive from the intercourſe of private life: not having mixed much in the ſocieties of private individuals, he is not likely to have any ſpleen to gratify, or friendſhip to indulge, which might bias the erect and impartial juſtice of government.

But it is evident, that this advantage of an hereditary conſtitution will be deſtroyed, if every exciſeman with a bit of Orange riband flaunting from his button-hole is to become the executive magiſtrate of the pariſh. Individuals will not live under the pro-

tection of equal laws adminiſtered without paſſion or prejudice by a magiſtrate ſo far raiſed above them that he cannot poſſibly be ſuppoſed to ſelect any of them as the objects of his animoſity or ſpleen, but will be ſubjected to the tyranny of all the paſſions which can infeſt the breaſt of a man in private life.

If, however, the aſſociations in queſtion were of this deſcription ſolely, I ſhould not venture to cenſure them with any ſeverity. Extraordinary times require extraordinary proceedings. A great man who well underſtood and fondly cheriſhed liberty, has ſaid—when bad men conſpire, good men muſt aſſociate.

The Engliſh conſtitution cannot be expected to purſue its elevated majeſtic courſe without deviation, when all the evil paſſions of the human breaſt are let looſe againſt it. Aſſociations of what are called United Iriſhmen have been formed for the deſtruction of civil order, and aſſociations of the loyal and well-diſpoſed to counteract them may be allowed.

If civil liberty and good government ſuffer in this conteſt, they alone are anſwerable for the conſequences, who, by their wicked attempts to deſtroy the frame of the ſtate, induce the warmeſt friends of the ancient rights of the nation to countenance proceedings which they would not otherwiſe approve of. It is thus that licentiouſneſs produces deſpotiſm, and the ſupporters of what is falſely called

called popular liberty, become the moſt powerful auxiliaries of arbitrary power.

Aſſociations of this kind have met with the approbation of perſons in the ſiſter country, to whoſe authority I ſhould ever make it a point to ſubmit my private ſentiments.

If, therefore, the Orange Clubs went no farther than I have ſtated, I ſhould ſcarcely venture to condemn them. Though I ſhould not approve of them as a general inſtitution, I ſhould admit they were warranted by the particular circumſtances of the times.

I have already obſerved that I ſhall take no vague popular reports in commenting upon theſe aſſociations. Oaths have been imputed to them at which humanity ſhudders, and which it is impoſſible could ever form a band of connexion between honeſt men. I ſhall advert only to two principles which are confeſſedly eſſential to the inſtitution, and which appear to me in the higheſt degree blameable; the firſt is the rigid excluſion of Roman Catholics; the ſecond, the oath of ſecrecy by which the members bind themſelves.

If the Orange Clubs are aſſociations of loyalty to maintain the authority of the magiſtrate, and reſtrain the ſeditious, why not admit every perſon who has given good proofs of his attachment to the go-

vernment of the country, without any reference to religious opinions? To exclude Roman Catholics, as ſuch, is ſubſtantially to ſay, that every perſon profeſſing that faith is naturally an ally of the French demagogues, and unworthy of truſt from the eſtabliſhed government. I think I have already ſhown that nothing can be falſer than ſuch a ſentiment. I am ſure that every thinking man will agree with me that nothing can be more pernicious than to propagate it. What can more effectually aſſiſt the views of the French rulers in any deſign of invaſion which they may meditate againſt this country, than to tell the majority of our people, the tenour of their religious belief would naturally perſuade them to forward the objects of their wicked ambition?

As a plan of policy, this contrivance is abſurd and ridiculous in the extreme; as an experiment of ingenuity, it would be entitled to ſome praiſe. All the whimſical combinations that ever preſented themſelves to the greateſt lovers of the monſtrous, that ever agitated the dreams of a perſon in the burning violence of a fever, never equalled the ſingular union that theſe gentlemen would effect—of French principles, and the Roman Catholic faith. Without their aſſiſtance, I ſuppoſe it would not enter into the diplomatic imagination of l'Abbé Sieyes himſelf, for the maſſacrers of the Catholic clergy in France, and the invaders of their property—for the murderers of the Pope, to look for allies among the bigotted peaſantry of Ireland.

 I ſhall

I ſhall not enlarge upon this topic;—the folly of the principle blended inſeparably with the Orange inſtitution is too glaring not to preſs upon the underſtanding of every unprejudiced obſerver.

I paſs to the ſecond rule of theſe clubs, to bind the members by an oath of ſecrecy. Political aſſociations with an oath of ſecrecy covering their proceedings from the public view, as they are new in the annals of the Britiſh Conſtitution, ſo they are in the higheſt degree pernicious, and even criminal.—There is no knowing what uſe the factious may make of ſuch an inſtitution.

The Orange Clubs are loyal to-day, but who will anſwer for their continuing ſo? May they not become to-morrow the inſtruments of private ambition? The oath of ſecrecy by which they are ſheltered from the obſervation of the government, affords an opportunity of engrafting any principles upon them, of converting them to any purpoſe. I think this ſubject deſerves the ſerious conſideration of the Legiſlature; and it is a very important queſtion, whether ſtrong means ſhould not be adopted to ſuppreſs ſuch aſſociations.

An act has been paſſed, if I miſtake not, in England, obliging all clubs and ſocieties to give a public account of the objects of their inſtitution.

An exemption was demanded in favour of the Free-Maſons; but though this inſtitution was ſtated and admitted to be an inſtitution purely benevolent, the wiſe ſtateſmen who diſcuſſed the queſtion, thought all ſocieties in general, ſheltered from the inſpection of the magiſtrate by an oath of ſecrecy, incompatible with regular government.

But I am not under the neceſſity of making uſe of legal or conſtitutional analogies in the preſent argument. I aſſert roundly, that by an expreſs act of Parliament all Orange Clubs are illegal meetings, and all perſons tendering the Orange oath are guilty of felony, and liable to tranſportation for life. The act of the 27th of the King, in the part relative to unlawful oaths, runs in theſe words:

" Any perſon or perſons *not duly qualified by law to adminiſter oaths*, who ſhall adminiſter, or cauſe to be adminiſtered, or tender or cauſe to be tendered to, or by threats, promiſes, perſuaſions, or other undue means, cauſe, induce, or procure to be taken by any perſon or perſons any unlawful oath or ſolemn engagement upon a book or otherwiſe, and being by due courſe of law thereof convicted, ſhall be adjudged guilty of felony, and may be tranſported for life; and every perſon who ſhall take any ſuch oath or ſolemn engagement as aforeſaid, not being thereto compelled by inevitable neceſſity, and being by due courſe of law thereof convicted, ſhall be adjudged

judged guilty of felony, and ſuffer as a felon, and may be tranſported for ſeven years."

This clauſe is not very correctly drawn. It may ſeem doubtful, on an inattentive peruſal of the firſt part, whether it is the circumſtance of the oath's being adminiſtered by a perſon not lawfully qualified, or the oath's not being in its nature lawful, or undue means being uſed to cauſe its being taken;—which of theſe conſtitutes the guilt under the ſtatute. But the reader will obſerve that phraſe "ſolemn engagement" is put in the firſt part as ſynonimous with unlawful oath, and unlawful oath is entirely omitted in the ſecond part. I apprehend, therefore, the ſtatute attaches to every oath, however in its form legal, adminiſtered by a perſon not duly qualified*. With reſpect to undue means, perſuaſion is one of the undue means mentioned in the act. No doubt can ariſe therefore on this head.

It will not be ſaid that this act was levelled againſt perſons of an oppoſite deſcription to the members of the Orange Clubs. The Legiſlature, to guard againſt abuſes and evaſions, forbids generally all oaths adminiſtered by perſons not qualified by law. When the Act of Parliament is thus unqualified in the prohibition, it is not for the private individual

* A gentleman, whoſe kindneſs will ever claim my grateful remembrance, as his profeſſional learning muſt command my reſpect, informs me there was a reſolution of the Judges in ſupport of this interpretation; but his abſence on circuit prevented me from obtaining the neceſſary references.

to ſay, "I may tranſgreſs the general rule delivered in "ſo many words, becauſe, in my imagination, my caſe "does not fall within the meaning of the Legiſlature." My only anſwer is, Such is the law, and every Iriſh ſubject is bound to obey it.

I had thus far proceeded with a cautious ſtep, when the melancholy tidings from the Continent ruſhed upon my ear. I have endeavoured to impreſs my mind with a religious ſenſe of the awful taſk I have undertaken; I know I have all the prejudices of many of the moſt virtuous of my readers to encounter. It is not without heſitation that I put my pen to paper, to perſuade my countrymen to give up the pride, nay, let me call it if I will, the idle boaſt of a nominal independence. I reſpect that pride; it is a glorious boaſt; it is connected with the beſt feelings, with the nobleſt paſſions. Woe to that nation which is not proud!

I have turned the matter over and over again in my mind, and it is from a thorough conſcientious conviction, that a Union with Great Britain will be for the happineſs of the Iriſh people, that I have traced the arguments which the reader has peruſed; it will deliver them from the party government which has long oppreſſed them; which has pinned their noble faculties to the earth. It will ſecure a fair unprejudiced hearing to their grievances; a calm diſpaſſionate diſcuſſion to their laws. Iriſh genius and Iriſh valour will have room to exert themſelves; we ſhall not be

confined

confined to the melancholy taſk of reading the achievements of our countrymen in ſome mercenary foreign ſervice, where the eye of the patriot muſt drop a tear over every victory. Iriſhmen ſhall lead the armies of their King and country to battle and to glory.

But after all, every writer in favour of the Union comes in a very queſtionable ſhape; his arguments ſhould not only provoke a full and thorough inveſtigation, but ſhould be canvaſſed with jealouſy and ſuſpicion. I have done my duty; I have ſatisfied my conſcience; I have delivered the opinion which I think conducive to the intereſt of my countrymen, and I have ſupported it by the reaſons which have determined my own mind. It is now for my readers to diſcharge their duty on their part. The Iriſhman who aſſents to an Union, without the fulleſt conviction on his breaſt, commits a flagrant crime againſt God and his country.

But recent events preſent a more momentous queſtion to our minds. Important as the queſtion of the Union is, there is one of a ſtill higher order of importance. Perſons muſt not deceive themſelves; this is not a common war; this is not one of thoſe conteſts which formerly engaged the attention of Europe, in which the reſtleſs, unquiet paſſions of the human breaſt were let looſe, in ſtruggling for ſome trifling, often imaginary point of intereſt, often ſome punctilio of chimerical honour. This is a prevailing error.

It has ariſen, not merely from the voluntary miſrepreſentations of men who conceive they have an intereſt in miſleading us, but it is very much the offspring of vulgar craft. Shrewd, cunning men, of narrow views and little policy, have been very much the dupes of their own conceited littleneſs. When the true nature of the war is ſtated, they give a ſignificant ſhrug or contemptuous ſmile, and ridicule ſuch language as the effuſion of ſchoolboy romance. There is no doubt but the French nobleman, who, when titles and armorial bearings were aboliſhed in France, diſplayed a cloud painted on the arms of his carriage, with the motto, *Ca paſſera,* hugged himſelf in the conceit that he had as much wiſdom as wit; yet we have ſeen the conſequences; the French nobleman in queſtion is perhaps at this day begging his bread at the door of ſome proud almoner in a foreign capital; whereas he might be rolling in ſplendour at home, if he and his brethren had ſeen clearly the nature of the conjuncture which was about to open upon them. Let, then, the tribe of vulgar mechanical politicians, as I think Burke calls them, be ſilent. Theſe are not times for the cant of narrow-minded ſhrewdneſs; theſe are not queſtions that are within the range of their every-day ſpeculations. To ſave ourſelves from deſtruction, we muſt riſe to an accurate knowledge of our ſituation. Formerly the zeal and paſſion of private men, in political diſcuſſions, were juſtly ridiculed. To make uſe of an expreſſion of Goldſmith, in his pleaſant Comedy of *She Stoops to Conquer:* "We had need to trouble "ourſelves as little about Hyder Ally, as about Ally "Croaker." But the events of this time have brought political

political queſtions to the fire-ſide of the moſt retired individual. Every perſon who has a foot of ground in the world, every perſon who aſpires to ſupport himſelf and family by honeſt induſtry, is intereſted in reſiſting the conſpiracy of deſperate adventurers for the deſtruction of the laws and inſtitutions, which ſecure to every man the enjoyment of his acquiſitions. I do not know any claſs of men which is not intereſted. Even to thoſe deſperate adventurers themſelves, if they are not as regardleſs of their own lives as they are of all laws human and divine, of the commands of their Maker, and the happineſs of their fellow-creatures, I would propoſe the example of the Duke of Orleans. Did ever the imagination of the moſt gloomy fanatic conceive ſo tormenting a hell as muſt have raged in his breaſt, when hurried to an ignominious death by thoſe very men whom he had nurſed in the boſom of crimes, he caſt a laſt look on the ſcene of his paſt greatneſs and ſplendour, on the Palais Royal! What muſt have been his reflections when he thought to what end he had brought himſelf, and by what means! and yet, if the moſt prodigal waſte of the largeſt patrimony could ſecure the friendſhip of the wicked, it was not among thoſe whoſe horrible countenances ſurrounded his bloody ſcaffold, that he had reaſon to look for his executioners. If unſhaken perſeverance in crimes could ſecure permanent proſperity to wickedneſs, that atrocious conſpirator againſt his name and blood, might hope for no other puniſhment but the avenging ſcorpions of a guilty conſcience. He was ſhackled in the career of his iniquity, neither by principle nor prejudice.

I would adviſe, therefore, the firmeſt deſperadoes to reflect before they plunge their country into unparalleled wretchedneſs, by a ſeries of unparalleled crimes. If the Duke of Orleans was too high to affect them by the parallel, let them look at the names of thoſe who began the bloody proceſſion of French crimes. L'Abbé Sieyes is almoſt the only one who has not either expiated his guilt on the ſcaffold, or who does not bear about him the ſingular and merited fate of being deteſted in wretchedneſs—who is not at once the needy and abhorred outcaſt of ſociety.

With reſpect to all other deſcriptions of men, I would beſeech, I would implore them to forget their animoſities in the common cauſe of their country. This is not the concern of one ſect or of one party. Every worſhipper of the Deity, at whatever altar he kneels, in whatever form he offers up his ſupplications to his Maker, muſt abandon his creed when he abandons the ſtandard to which I would exhort him. Every man who has any regard for good government, whether he is attached to a monarchical or republican form, is intereſted in repelling the invaſion which menaces all the inſtitutions of civil life.

Let the harſh voice of bluſtering perſecution be ſtill. I would not recommend an effeminate mercy —I would not relax the arm of Government—the times require ſeverity; but let public juſtice be dignified as well as ſevere. Let the magiſtrate employ

the rigour of the law, not ſeem to let looſe the impetuous paſſions of the individual. Let him remember, that violence is not vigour, that cruelty is not ſeverity.

Government, by aſſuming this dignified attitude, by exerting all the firmneſs, without any of the acrimony, of a rigorous policy, will beſt ſecure the public ſafety, and baffle the machinations of the factious.

I do not ſpeak this voice of ſolemn exhortation from affectation or pedantry: when I write I dip my pen in my heart. I am impreſſed with the moſt awful ſenſe of the dangers which threaten my country. The events on the Continent have ſpread a gloom over my mind. It has pleaſed Providence, whoſe ways are unſearchable, and who works for ends beyond the limits of human ſagacity, by means above the ſphere of human comprehenſion, to give victory to armies arrayed againſt the civil order of mankind. I came to the undertaking which I have now brought to a concluſion, with other hopes, with a more joyous temper of mind: I looked forward to the exemplary puniſhment of ſucceſsful wickedneſs, for the diſſolution of the involuntary ſcepticiſm, which, during its proſperity, had ſtolen upon me.

SÆPE mihi dubiam traxit ſententia mentem,
Curarent Superi terras, an nullus ineſſet
Rector, & incerto fluerent mortalia caſu.
Nam cum diſpoſiti quæſiſſem fœdera mundi,
Præſcriptoſque maris fines, annique meatus,
Et lucis, noctiſque vices: tunc omnia rebar
Conſilio firmata Dei, qui lege moveri
Sidera, qui fruges diverſo tempore naſci,
Qui variam Phœben alieno juſſerit igne
Compleri, ſolemque ſuo: porrexerit undis
Littora: tellurem medio libraverit axe.
Sed cum res hominum tanta caligine volvi
Adſpicerem, lætoſque diu florere nocentes,
Vexarique pios: rurſus labefacta cadebat
Relligio, cauſſæque viam non ſponte ſequebar
Alterius, vacuo quæ currere ſemina motu
Affirmat, magnumque novas per inane figuras
Fortuna, non arte, regi: quæ Numina ſenſu
Ambiguo vel nulla putat, vel neſcia noſtri.
Abſtulit hunc tandem Rufini pœna tumultum,
Abſolvitque Deos, jam non ad culmina rerum
Injuſtos creviſſe queror, tolluntur in altum,
Ut lapſu graviore ruant——

CLAUD. *in* RUF.

OFTEN have doubts ariſen in my mind,
Whether a God took care of human kind,
Whether eternal Juſtice rul'd the ball,
Or Chance, blind arbitreſs, directed all.
Upwards whene'er I caſt my raptur'd eyes,
And view'd the ſtructure of the ſtarry ſkies,
Beheld the ſun purſue his bright career,
And trac'd the wonders of the rolling year,
Saw the proud ſea its ſtated tides fulfil,
Methought its waves obey'd a Maſter's will:
A God appear'd to guide the vaſt deſign:
He gave the night to gloom, the day to ſhine:
He cloth'd the moon's dark orb with borrow'd rays;
With native fire ſupplied the ſolar blaze:
The ſeaſons He diſpos'd in myſtic range;
With various fruits adorn'd the grateful change:
He bade the waves reſpect the ſubject ſands,
Earth, in the centre, balanc'd with his hands.
But when I turn'd my aching ſight below,
And ſaw the various forms of human woe—
Saw anguiſh clinging to the virtuous breaſt,
The wicked proſper, and the good oppreſt,
I knew not where the awful truth to find,
My faith was ſtagger'd, and unfix'd my mind;
Spite of myſelf, ſtrange doubts poſſeſs'd my breaſt,
And what my heart abhorr'd my head confeſt:
I half believ'd what erring men advance
Of crowding atoms and the reign of Chance.
My doubts have ceas'd, ſince I beheld thy fall:
A God, 't is ſure, Rufinus, governs all.
Oft are the wicked lifted up on high,
But their ſucceſs not long inſults the ſky.

Their

Their fate is fix'd: the higher they aſcend,
The heavier fall awaits them in the end.

CLAUD. *againſt* RUFINUS*.

* I beg the learned reader will forgive this looſe tranſlation, or rather imitation. My ſole deſign in the attempt was to give ſuch fair readers as may caſt an eye on theſe pages, ſome faint notion of the beauties of the original.

THE END.

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